

Supplement B, Form I-589

Additional Information About Your Claim to Asylum

A-Number (if available)

NONE

Date

04/24/2013

Applicant's Name

Randeepa Prabudda Rajapaksha

Applicant's Signature

**NOTE:** Use this as a continuation page for any additional information requested. Copy and complete as needed.

Part

B

Question

My name is Randeepa Prabudda Rajapaksha. I am a Sinhala Buddhist from 8/3D, St. Anderson Road, Kadawatha, Sri Lanka. I was born on July 6th 1987 and I studied at St. Joseph College in Colombo from January 1993 until December 2003.

My father and mother were separated since 1994 and I lived with my mother and my younger sister. My mother was a school teacher and she took care of me and my younger sister from her income. We didn't have any contact with my father and he never gave us any support.

After I left school I stayed at home for about two years and then started working for a travel agent who recruited people to work in middle eastern countries. My dream was to join a ship and work as a sailor and I kept exploring the possibility of joining a ship. I obtained a passport in March 2007 and followed some short seaman courses and obtained a seaman book in August 2007. Although I had the basic requirements to join a ship no shipping company recruited me.

I met an agent in March 2012 and he promised to find me a job in passenger cruise lines if I followed a 6 months course which is conducted in Malaysia. He asked for US \$. 10,000.00 as his fee including the course fee and all travel expenses. After discussing with my mother I agreed to pay the fee to the agent. I paid part of the agent's fee in April 2012 and he accompanied me to Malaysia with few others on April 18th 2012. We were given accommodation in Malaysia by the agent and we joined the Crew Skills International (Malaysia) Snd Bhd to follow the 6 months course.

While I was attending this school I met many Sri Lankans who were also studying at this school. Most of them were Jaffna Tamils who had fled Jaffna few years ago due to the ethnic war in that region. Two Jaffna Tamils named Anandaraj Pumalai (Anand) and Suresh Kumar (Suresh) became my closest friends and we spent time together during our holidays. Anand and Suresh lived in an apartment with some other Tamils in Ipoh.



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The school sent us to the USA embassy for C1/D visa batch by batch and I went to the USA embassy in July 2012 with some other students. We were issued visas on July 19th 2012. I completed the course in October 2012 and the agent wanted me to return to Sri Lanka to find a ship. When I returned to Sri Lanka on October 25th 2012 my friends Anand and Suresh also came to Sri Lanka with me. They also planned to join cruise lines and they went to Jaffna in order to visit their family members before they joined a ship.

After returning to Sri Lanka I contacted the agent and the agent started looking for a ship for me. Meanwhile Anand and Suresh visited me often and we kept trying with other shipping agents looking for vacancies. We went to several shipping lines and left our information with them asking them to contact us if they had any vacancies.

My agent contacted me in December 2012 and told me that there is a vacancy in a ship named M/ V Rhapsody. I signed the contract with the shipping agent in Colombo but they suddenly told me that they don't have the vacancy anymore. I was very disappointed and frustrated.

My friends Anand and Suresh came to my house on January 10th 2013 and told me that there are some vacancies in a ship and we must contact Sealine Shipping Company. We went to the Sealine Shipping Company on January 11th 2012 and left our applications with them and they said that they would contact us soon.

Anand and Suresh stayed with me in my house and they planned to spend the weekend with me. On Saturday, January 12th 2012 we went to Colombo. We went to see a movie and then had dinner in a restaurant in Colombo. Then we got into a three wheel taxi in order to go to my house. On the way to my house we had to cross the Kelaniya Bridge and we were stopped at the bridge by the army who had a permanent checkpoint there. My friends didn't have an ID with them and therefore they always carried their passports. The army looked at their passport and questioned them why they didn't have an ID with them. My friends had to explain to the army that there ID's were taken by the LTTE and they were in Malaysia for few years and

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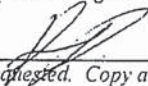
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returned to Sri Lanka few months ago. The army looked at them suspiciously and they wanted to question them further. The army arrested my two Tamil friends including me and took us to the Slave Island army camp for further questioning.

We were locked in a cell and we were very scared. Before they locked us in the cell I gave my home phone number to one of the army officers and begged him to call my mother and tell her that I was in army custody.

We were kept in the cell until the following morning and then removed from the cell one by one. First they took my Tamil friends away and then took me to a room. There were four army officers and they questioned me about my Tamil friends and my relationship with them. I explained to the officers how I met them in Malaysia and when they returned to Sri Lanka. The army officers told me that they strongly believe that the two Tamils were LTTE members and they had fled Sri Lanka before the LTTE was defeated. The army officers threatened to kill me if I didn't tell them everything I knew about my Tamil friends. I told the army officers that I met them in Malaysia and I don't know anything about their background. The army officers told me that there is an LTTE group operating in Malaysia and I must be well aware of it. They threatened to kill me if I didn't tell them about my Tamil friends' affiliation to this group. I kept saying that I was telling the truth but they didn't believe. They falsely accused me of withholding information of LTTE members and started to beat me. I was undressed and made nude. I was beaten, threatened and mistreated by army officers. I was tied to a rope hanging from the roof and beaten with a plastic pipe. They beat me until I became unconscious. Finally they sprayed water on my face and locked me back in a cell.

I didn't see my Tamil friends after that and I remained in this cell for few more days. Next time I was taken before a high ranking army officer and questioned. He asked me the same kind of questions and I gave him the same answers. Then again I was taken to a room and questioned

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by the same four officers. This time also I was beaten, threatened and falsely accused that I was hiding information to the army. I never thought that I would go home alive.

My mother somehow negotiated with the army and got me released on January 25th 2013. The army ordered me to report to them once a week as my Tamil friends were still in army custody. My mother told me that she had to use the influence of a politician to get me released. My mother said that she met the parents of my Tamil friends at the army camp. After learning that I was released the parents of my Tamil friends met me at my residence. I told them what happened and they were very worried about their sons.

After I was released I started receiving threatening calls from unidentified people. The callers recognized them as Jathika Hela Urumaya and called me a traitor. My neighborhood is populated with Buddhist people and there are many racist and extremist members of Jathika Hela Urumaya. They threatened to kill me and I was afraid of them. When I reported to the army some army officers treated me very badly. They cursed me in bad language and threatened to abduct and kill me. I was very scared and told my mother that I cannot take it anymore. She sent me to my uncles house in Alawwa and told me to hide. I switched off my cell phone and didn't contact anyone other than my mother.

Since I didn't report to the army on the following week the army went looking for me. My mother had told them that I have gone abroad. The army officers had been very angry and they had threatened my mother that they would arrest and kill me. While in hiding I contacted the Celebrity Cruise Line through an agent in Indonesia and they agreed to hire me. They processed my application and told me to join a ship in Puerto Rico. I left my country on March 8th 2012 and went to Doha in transit. My flight was delayed in Doha and I missed the ship when I went to San Juan, Puerto Rico on March 9th 2013. Then the agent in Puerto Rico told me to go to George Town, Cayman Island to join another ship. I changed my mind at this time and

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contacted a friend in New York. Then I came to New York on January 13th 2013 stayed without joining any ship.

I am seeking asylum in USA as I fear to return to my country. I am afraid that the Sri Lanka army would arrest and persecute me under false accusation. I am also afraid of the racist and extremist organization named Jathika Hela Urumaya as they had been threatening to kill me, calling me a traitor.

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